

## **NATIONAL AGENDA SPEAKER SERIES**

### **DAVID BONIOR AND MICHAEL CASTLE**

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Transcript of Event

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DR. HOFFMAN: Good evening everyone and thank you for joining us at the Seventh Annual National Agenda Program. Tonight's event is free and open to the public like all of our National Agenda events to create a space for thoughtful and critical dialogue. I encourage audience participation both from the audience here in Mitchell Hall and via Twitter. Just tweet at the account @udelagenda to join the discussion or tag the tweet with #voicesofudel. Your question could make it into our conversation tonight. We're also live streaming tonight at [udel.edu/udlive](http://udel.edu/udlive). But as always I'd like to remind our audience that civil and respectful dialogue is expected at our National Agenda programs. While we may seem more divided than at any time in our memories, we are still bound together as Americans and as human beings. 2017 brings us into an era of incredible discord and violence over racism and a seeming inability to bridge our differences. But I believe it's possible to bridge those divides. That's why we do what we do. We demonstrate civil dialogue so you can bring that civility to your own conversations. We aim to temper down the heat, to abate the anger, and to recede from hate. Instead, we hope to inspire curiosity, create compassion, and offer real solutions for constructive communication. So, let's all be candid but also courteous of each other's views. We're also a little more interactive this year. We've introduced a, to the audience Q and a catch box, a microphone that you can literally toss back and forth to each other; a box that you're going to throw back and forth to each other. We have two student volunteers in each of the aisles in the center who will facilitate that conversation. And this year is also new for our Voices of the Divide Audio Essay Contest. America has become even more polarized. Have you ever felt marginalized? How has that experience shaped your own life and the lives of those around you? Share your

story with the UD's Library, The Writing Center, and other units on campus. Put together a high-quality audio essay, and yes, there are cash prizes for students. So tonight I am delighted to welcome two former congressmen from opposite sides of the aisle who served during another tumultuous time in Congress.

These two men have witnessed the years of partisan bickering, much like we are seeing today. We're talking political divides, past and present. First, David Bonior started his career in politics as a member of the Michigan State House of Representatives, 1973 to 1977. He was elected as a Democrat to the 95th and 12 succeeding Congresses from 1977 to 2003. Bonior served as a Democratic Whip from 1991 to 2002 when democrats were first in the majority and then in the minority. Please join me in welcoming Congressman David Bonior to the University of Delaware.

AUDIENCE: [Applause.]

DR. HOFFMAN: Our second speaker is a familiar face to University of Delaware students and for Delawareans alike. Mike Castle most recently served as the U.S. Representative for Delaware's At-Large Congressional District, the oldest district in the United States from 1993 to 2011. Prior to his election to Congress Castle served as a member of the Delaware General Assembly starting in the State House of Representatives and then in the State Senate. He was the 20th Lieutenant Governor of Delaware from 1981 to 1985 and the 69th Governor of Delaware from 1985 to 1992. Please give a big Blue Hen welcome to Governor Mike Castle.

AUDIENCE: [Applause.]

DR. HOFFMAN: So, thank you to both of you for being here tonight for a bipartisan discussion. I'd like to start by reminding our audience that they can

tweet @udel.agenda to have their questions possibly answered in this conversation. But I'd ask both Congressman and Governor to talk about their experiences in a few remarks. So we'll start with Congressman Bonior.

DAVID BONIOR: Well thank you so much. It's a delight to be here on campus and with this wonderful crowd tonight who is, who are going to miss, I guess, part of the seventh game of the World Series. Congratulations for your patriotism to your country --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

DAVID BONIOR: -- and to your university. I'd like to first of all thank Professor Lindsay Hoffman for the effort that she has put into putting this program together and for the chance to visit with her class today and speak with her students.

David Redlawsk who is, I hope, I think here tonight. There he is and, and Alicia. I want to thank David very much for introducing me to the University and asking me to come, come by and, and be a part of this wonderful program. And I'm especially pleased to join Michael Castle who had a distinguished career in the Congress, in the Delaware General Assembly, and as the Lieutenant Governor and Governor of this great state. In Congress he was a highly respected moderate whose reasoned approach on controversial issues like gun restrictions, stem cell research, and LGBT rights was a breath of fresh air. He was a courageous Republican in a congress that more and more was leaning to the far right. You know, over the years I've watched the truth get twisted in our nation, national politics as the nation became more and more polarized. It reminds me of the story of the two students who were not prepared for their history exam. Instead of studying they went out and they had a good time, they had fun, and the next day they slept through the exam. They later went to their professor and

said we're sorry we missed the exam but we were out last night running errands and got a flat tire. We didn't have a spare, we were a long way from home, and we spent most of the night trying to find a new tire. We were wondering if we could take the exam tomorrow. Well, the professor thought for a minute and then he agreed. The next morning the two students showed up to take the exam, the professor handed each one of them an exam booklet and put them in different rooms. They opened to page one and it read question one worth five points, who was the president during the civil war? Well they thought, well this is going to be easy, a piece of cake. They answered the question and turned the page. And here's what it said, question 2 worth 95 points, which tire?

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

DAVID BONIOR: You know, we live in a, in a, a, a period of time right now where more and more people are writing about the post truth world. In our politics today we are witnessing and seeing vulgarity, mendacity, stagnation, and incompetence. Many of our citizens have lost confidence in our governmental institutions. We will be talking about democracy tonight and our democracy is suffering from a lack of honesty and courage. This in turn has resulted in ignoring major democratic structural problems and let me name just three worth focusing upon because without reforming, I believe, these basic undergirding structural pieces we will continue to widen our democracy gap. Three difficult yet significant projects that need attention if we are going to heal our democracy I believe are, number one, electoral college reform; number two, negating the Citizens United Supreme Court decision of 2010; and number three, reforming gerrymandering and creating more competitive legislative districts. Now there are others of course but for time purposes I'm just going to suggest these three.

If you want to talk about some of that tonight I'd be more than happy to do that. The Electoral College makes a mockery of the doctrine of one-person one vote. Five presidential candidates received the most popular votes for president yet were not elected. And those five happened to be Democrats. The last, Hillary Clinton, had close to almost three million-vote margin over Donald Trump. There is a movement to change this. It's called the National Popular Vote Movement. Ten states and the District of Columbia have changed their laws to mandate that members of the Electoral College from their states vote for a national candidate with the most popular votes. Those states if you add them up are about 165 electoral votes. So in order for this to actually to have any meaning you really have to have 270 which is the magic number. States that can apprise 270 votes. Another citizen reform effort is the Citizens United Campaign Reform. In 2010, as I said, the Supreme Court opened the door to having a, what I would call, a political oligarchy. The wealthiest citizens and corporations were giving, given an amazing advantage in financing campaign and candidates. It defined person; corporations as persons opening the floodgates for unlimited corporate money. Now, national polls have shown that an overwhelming number of citizens, 83 percent of Democrats, and 80 percent of Republicans want this ruling overturned. 19 states have passed laws for petitioning the Congress to change the Court decision, allowing the Congress in the states to develop their own rules and restrictions regarding financed elections, financing elections. Half; we're halfway there; 19 in 38 for an amendment and this issue is actually got broad support among former members of Congress like Mike and myself as well as others around the country. I shouldn't speak for Mike on this one. There will be other things that we agree on, I don't know about this one.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

DAVID BONIOR: So, pardon me for that. Thirdly, reforming gerrymandering, creating a more competitive legislative districts. As Professor Redlawsk has said, today fewer than 10 percent of congressional districts are competitive leading to increased polarization in national politics with members of Congress answerable only to the minority who turn out in their party's primary. 37 states do it the old way and allow their legislatures, those who are, are, are intimately involved in the outcome of the decision to draw the lines. And we have seven states like Delaware that are single district states underscoring the idea that small is beautiful I guess.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

DAVID BONIOR: Our reform efforts are on the ballot or trying to get on the ballot in a number of states; Michigan, my state is one of them. Iowa, another state that I'm familiar with has an independent commission that makes these decisions and I'm hopeful that other citizens across the country will engage in their own states to push this forward as well. You know, there's an old story about Harry Truman. He was campaigning one day and he was going door to door and he knocked on the door and this woman answered the door and she was a little bit perturbed and put out that he was there and he stuck out his hand and he said, I'm Harry Truman, I'd like to have your vote. And she looked him in the eye and she says, well, Mr. Truman I know who you are and I wouldn't vote for you if you were Saint Peter himself. And without missing a beat Truman said, with all due respects ma'am, if I was Saint Peter you wouldn't be in my district.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

DAVID BONIOR: There are a lot of other reforms we could talk about and I

hope we will get into them tonight because they're important. You know, a wise French visitor, Alexis de Tocqueville said, "the greatness of America lies not in being more enlightened than any other nation but rather in her ability to repair her faults." So, ladies and gentlemen, our democratic faults are, are piling up and we've got to get busy to get things done so we can put our country back on track again. It's a pleasure to be with you and I look forward to our discussion this evening.

AUDIENCE: [Applause.]

MIKE CASTLE: Good job, David. Thank you, David. I, I would like to first make sure we do welcome David and Judy his wife here to Delaware. We appreciate them taking the time to be here. He may have been too humble to say it -- maybe it was in his introduction and I missed it -- but he was also the, the Whip of, of the Democratic Party when he was in the Congress of the United States. Therefore, even Republicans had to pay attention to him.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

MIKE CASTLE: You know, I, I got to tell you one story, a quick story, sort of an aside from anything here tonight. But, he mentioned the fellow who, who missed the exam. I had a, a good friend from high school who was also a very good athlete and he went to Duke University where he played a variety of sports or whatever and eventually he didn't make it academically and he came back and he, he attempted to finish college here at the University of, of Delaware. And he had a made a friend at, at Duke who was involved with a baseball team -- I, I think the baseball Giants or somebody of that nature -- and his friend called and said, look I've got an extra ticket to the game tonight, do you want to go up in Philadelphia? And he said, sure. The only problem was he had a history exam

that night and so he cut the history exam and went up to the game. And, the professor asked him where he had been for the history exam the next day and my friend said, well this good friend called and I, I went to the game; I'm sorry. And the professor said, look, I like you, I'll let you make it up tonight. And so, he got organized for that and he got another phone call from his friend who said how'd you like to come back for the second game? He came back for the second game; I think he flunked history in that particular circumstance.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

MIKE CASTLE: But in any event, being in, in Congress was at times difficult, at times trying, and at times very rewarding. Chances are that my staff helped more than one person in this room if I had to guess. I always tried to keep my ear to, to the ground and listen to what you were saying I, and, and vote to the conscience of, of the state of Delaware as much as I possibly could. You make many friends there. People ask me if I miss Congress. Anybody who misses what's happening in Congress now ought to have their head examined.

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

MIKE CASTLE: But, I do miss the fact that we were able to help people when I was there. I miss my friends from Congress. I miss my staff. And, it was actually a, a very rewarding experience and I'd certainly repeat it if given the opportunity and maybe I was 30 years younger or something of that nature. But the bottom line is that things do happened at Congress that are of significance to what happens in the United States of, of America. And, I, I agree thoroughly with David on one point and that is this whole business of gerrymandering which goes on in many parts of the states, I should say, of the country is, is really, I think, a

problem. My judgment is we ought to have some other system, perhaps judicial commissions or something of that nature which are much less political in their makeup to make these decisions about where some of these lines are. You should see the maps of some of these states with these long tentacles when all of a sudden somebody who is the congressperson lives over here but they actually represent people over here, and it, it's just ridiculous. And I think that needs to be addressed for sure. I think the Congress of the United States has got some significant issues. Right now we're talking about tax reform. And we can talk about tax reform tonight. But the bottom line is that we're going to need revenue. Either this economy needs to pick up or, or Congress is going to have to do something with respect to making reductions in some of the expenditures which are going on out there. And that's not going to be easy. We're all going to suffer if that happens. But it clearly needs to happen. We've been dealing with deficits and deficits add to the debt and the debt affects all the young people. We had the pleasure of being involved with a, a class here this afternoon and, you know, those young people are, are the ones who would suffer if indeed they don't have the opportunity to make sure that we're balancing budgets and, and making sure that we're not borrowing money to the point that we don't have any money left particularly to pay the interest with. As, as the interest debt, interest rates go up in the United States of America you're going to see a tremendous burden because of the debt that's been incurred primarily by Congress expending more money than it can afford and a heck of a lot of that lies in Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid which are basically mandatory programs to a great degree and as a result it, it's a huge problem as far as America is, is, is concerned that we as a country have to address. We have another concern right

now and that is our President and exactly the way he's going about his business at, at this point. We all should be concerned about that. I think the first thing you do is take away his tweeting abilities and, and then go from there. But, as a good Republican I am bothered by the fact that we are not getting a balance on, on things that we are doing in, in this country and that he is not reaching out to, to members of both political parties in the Congress of the United States. And instead of insulting them, bringing them in, and, and talking to them and convincing them of the right of things he should do in order to make this country great again, as he says, and it's just not happening the way I'd like to see it happen. So we need to work on, on that issue. One of the things that was of interest in Congress when I was there was the Contract With America which was adopted by Republicans in 1994 which also happens to be an election in which more Republicans, I think, percentage wise were elected than any other election in, in the history of the country. I brought papers with me explaining what that is because I can't remember what was in the Contract with America. But I just, I remember the general concepts. I remember it was if, if not a great program in terms of solving all the problems of America, it was a heck of a great political program and it made a difference that particular year and, and those who created it, and I was not one of those, but those who created it deserved a lot of credit for the, the politics of, of what they did. There are, are various milestones like that in, in Congress as we go along that have made a difference as, as far as the country is, is concerned. I think like everybody in this room, I, I believe in the fact that America is great, is still great and we have wonderful opportunities out there to help each other. But I think we need to work together in, in the Congress of the United States at the presidential level and frankly at the state level too. The

various governors and members of the, of the House and Senate in the various states with the exception of Nebraska which is a unicameral legislature work together in order to make sure that we are, are benefitting our constituents, the people who make a difference. I am, was proud to work with David on things and, and other people. And, it, it made a difference in, in Washington, D.C. It can make a difference all over this country but we need to work at it very hard. And I think with your support and backing our present elected officials in, in Delaware, who are good competent people, I think are going to be able to, to do that and make sure that Delaware is being represented as well as it possibly can be particularly when they go to Washington, D.C. and have to listen to what the political parties have to say. There's a huge divide within the media today and that's, that's disconcerting as well. You have very conservative media and you have media which is, is very liberal if, if you will. And that, that's a problem. You don't have the balance which you used to have in, in a lot of the media presentations that occur in the United States today. And so, we, we need to make absolutely sure that the media -- and I'm not a, one to convey the message fake news or anything like that but I, I do believe there's bias in a lot of things that happen in the media. And that is something that the people of this country need to rise up and say we need a straight story as far as the media is, is concerned. So another area that we have to deal with. So, tonight hopefully we're going to resolve all of the problems --

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

MIKE CASTLE: -- of, of the United States. And I'll sit down and we'll start on that. Thank you.

DR. HOFFMAN: Thank you.

AUDIENCE: [Applause.]

DR. HOFFMAN: I think I'll start with something that both of you mentioned which is gerrymandering and we had an open, this is the first year we've had an open forum on line for people to submit questions and the UD Sustainability Office ask, asked: over the past several decades what role do you think gerrymandering has played in political polarization? How has gerry, gerrymandering impacted that? How has it made it worse or better?

DAVID BONIOR: Well, I, I definitely think it's made it worse because what it has done is allowed the people who are drawing the lines, the legislators in this respect of states, to protect often times themselves and to draw districts that were, to be quite frank, overly protective and, and thereby creating a dynamic in all states where you didn't have very many competitive seats. As I quoted David Redlawsk, ten percent of the seats are competitive today. Now, that's happened on the Republican and Democratic side. I know in California, for instance, the Democrats control California Legislature and they've pretty sewn up -- there's; there are hardly any seats competitive in California, the biggest state in the Union today. And, I've seen it happen in, in Republican states that the, the Republicans control as well. Mike, Michael is absolutely right, we, I think we need to go to a more independent system so we have more competitive seats, the, the districts are more compact, and so we, you know, that's a piece of taking your democracy back. And, we have roughly half a dozen states that have independent systems in them, Iowa being one. What happens in Iowa I think is the, the leaders in the Legislature will nominate two people from their respective parties and then those two people will pick a third, a fourth, and a, a fifth, excuse me, independent

person. Yeah. That person has to be independent. Now there are other ways that that can be done. There are other ways of, of putting a commission together. We had a proposal once in Michigan where there three University presidents of the research universities in the state -- Michigan and Michigan State and Wayne State University -- people were suggesting that they be the commission. They didn't want anything to do with it. But, heh, heh --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

DAVID BONIOR: -- as you can imagine, they had, their budgets were dependent to some extent by the Legislature. But there are different ways to do this and we need to get about doing it.

MIKE CASTLE: I think that gerrymandering is; is a great problem. I, I think as such that all states should just have one member of the House of Representatives as Delaware does and everything will work a lot better than it does now. But more seriously, it, it is a problem because if you're, you take a gerrymandered district and all of a sudden you, you put a lot of Republicans in that district or a lot of Democrats in, in that district then you have the, the problems of they're going to vote that way because their political party will tell them to vote that way to, to a great degree. And, secondly, that they, they are worried about the threat of primaries more than they are the general elections. So, as a result, if, if they feel they have to be more conservative or not deal with the other party, more liberal, whatever it may be, in, in that case they are not going to be willing to sit down and work on the difficult facing America which quite candidly in, in, involve Republicans and Democrats pulling together and that just simply does not happen in, in certain circumstances. And let me just say, as far as Delaware is concerned, the, the so called gerrymandering also happens in our

state legislature, in fact, I remember it more there than any place else. It happens in all of these state legislatures. And essentially, it, it's a problem there as, as well. You have these districts that a Republican can't lose, you have other districts that a Democrat can't lose, and as a result you, you get this imbalance in the, the incredible overwhelming persuasion of, of the political party in, in that circumstance to keep people in line. And instead of sitting down and, and working out differences and getting things done you, you end up with some of the problems we're starting to see in Delaware. Great deficits, if you will, and other issues that have, have cropped up in, in, in recent years. And my judgment is the whole idea of having an, an independent group and I, I don't know if Iowa's method is the best or what's the best but whatever it is, an independent group making these decisions I think would make for better politics in the United States of America.

DR. HOFFMAN: Well, you've both talked about gerrymandering and the impact of that, and, and civic engagement more broadly. President Obama said at the inaugural Obama Foundation Summit yesterday that he believes that the moment we're in right now politics is the tail and not the dog; what we need to do is think about our civic culture. What can you say to young people to be more civically engaged even if that doesn't mean running for office?

DAVID BONIOR: Well, I think that with young people and, and hopefully everybody here can be a leader in this, they need to be encouraged to be involved. I mean, the, the class, Lindsay's class where we were this afternoon was a wonderful example of good, bright young people, I don't know 25 plus people in that room asking highly intelligent questions and being very engaged in, in, in terms of what the political process is. I don't, I don't know the politics of

most of those individuals but I know they're interested and they, they even asked how they would get involved and, and the bottom line there is its pretty simple. You, you can go, you, anybody can, you could be 90 years old or nine years old but you go into a political headquarters either of a candidate or of a political party and offer to help you may be doing something pretty menially maybe passing out literature or sorting things or something like that but you will be helping get people elected and that may lead to another position for a young person, interim position, and maybe even a, a position of employment at some point in time. And my judgment is we need to educate them to the possibilities of that. We need to educate them in, in the civics of how our states, our counties, our towns and our, our Congress and, and administration in Washington work so that they will have an abiding and continuing interest in that and, and follow it as they progress through their lives.]

DAVID BONIOR: I agree completely with what Michael said. I also think that you can't start too young with people. My first campaign was when I was six years of age.

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

DAVID BONIOR: I grew up in a Polish community in the city of Detroit and there used to a Bitter Maid potato chip store on the corner and I used to like to walk down to the corner and get some free chips. Well, they turned that Bitter Maid potato chip store into a campaign headquarters for a candidate once and I walked in there and they still had the chips and I wanted to, I wanted some chips and they said, well here well you do this, you pass these leaflets out along, along your block where you live and you can have some chips. And I said well okay but I want some red pop with the chips too. So that was my first campaign and

the first deal I cut.

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

MIKE CASTLE: [Laughter.]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

DAVID BONIOR: I got the red pop and I got the chip. I am engaged in my retirement from the Congress in something called the Mikva Challenge which is a program named after Abner Mikva former member of Congress that I served with, a former head judge of the appellate court, the Federal Appellate Court and former counsel to, in the White House. So he's, was quite an individual. He, as his legacy had his top people put together a program in Chicago about 20 years ago that would engage Chicago high school students at the junior and senior level in civic action. And, our motto for Mikva Challenge is "democracy is a verb." It's something you have to do. It's not something you have to write down; it's something you have to actually get engaged in. And this program has now roughly 7,000, I think, students in it in Chicago. We started it three years in D.C. And, to give you just a real quick example of the things that we do, we, they engage in group-committee action in their neighborhoods, in their schools. We have a, something called Project Soapbox where we have 1,000 kids now in D.C. that are working with teachers who we train on how to give a three to a five minute speech on something they care really deeply about. And some of these speeches are absolutely amazing. They'd knock you out of your chair. They talk about all kinds of things seeing; from wanting to go to college is their dream to seeing their friends and neighbors shot to death on their streets in Chicago or in Washington, D.C. It's a fabulous program. We brought 120, or 180 kids from Chicago and D.C. to Iowa to participate in the Iowa caucuses a couple of years

ago and we put them in all the different kinds of campaigns and they knocked on doors and made phone calls and they were exposed to, you know, political pros, they were exposed to the candidates. It was a great, great experience for them. They, they helped register voters. And on Election Day in D.C. we had 100 of them in D.C. this year working in the polling places. So you know when you come in to vote people that come and greet you and help you get through the lines and fill out what you have to fill out. They are there watching it. So they're watching democracy work in action. Those kinds of programs, it doesn't have to be the Mikva Challenge, but those kinds of civic action programs are invaluable. Invaluable. The, those kids will; we, we now have 20 years with the program so we've done some surveys on the ones that were in it originally and we've tested it against their peer groups in terms of participation; voting, you know, and, and being involved in their communities and it's much, much higher. It stays with them. So, I, I, I agree with what Michael said and I think we need to keep on thinking about getting young people involved because you can't do it too early or earlier enough.

DR. HOFFMAN: Well, so far I think what's interesting about what you guys have both discussed is that you agree in, in a lot of ways even coming from different sides of the aisle. I'd like to bring in student questions from my National Agenda class and Grace asks, so your terms overlapped in Congress; did you ever work together on any bipartisan legislation?

DAVID BONIOR: I don't think so. Well, he was the chairman of the committee that did coins and he did my Thomas Edison coin --

MIKE CASTLE: Right, there you go.

DAVID BONIOR: -- once for me, so --

MIKE CASTLE: [Laughter.]

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

DAVID BONIOR: -- we worked on that. Mike was also a leader, as I mentioned in my remarks, on the question of stem cell research and I was a supporter of that even though my position on some of this other tangential issues was different I always believed in, in, in stem cell research and, and the importance of it and what it might lead to. So, I was, I think I worked and was helpful with him on that issue.

MIKE CASTLE: Yeah, we, we, it's funny, you, you work together and sometimes you don't even realize you are working together. In other words, you're end up on the same side one way or another. Its, and David and I never had a harsh word as far as I know. He may have gone back in the Cloak Room and just said get that guy from Delaware out of here. I don't know, but, but, but the bottom line is that, you know, we were not in each other's face; we were not having that problem. You know, we abided by a lot of what we're talking about tonight and that is, you know, give, listen to each other, and give each other a break or an opportunity. The, the stem cell business was, and embryonic stem cells, all that matters it's vitally important and, and, and took a lot of legwork in order to get done. And, you know, we, we obviously we got probably more support from the Democrats than we did from the Republicans on, on that particular issue and, you know, we're very thankful for that. We were delighted to help with the Thomas Edison coin --

DAVID BONIOR: [Laughter.]

MIKE CASTLE: -- as a matter of fact. I just want you to know that.

DAVID BONIOR: He was born in my district; well not born there but he, his

boyhood was in my district.

DR. HOFFMAN: Well I bring this up because we recently did some polling around the issue of partisan divides and I think the audience is very familiar with the fact that right now Democrats and Republicans in the United States couldn't be more divided. And, we did a poll that looked at how Republicans and Democrats trust people who voted for someone in the opposite party in 2016. So, I'll just, I'll summarize this for you --

DAVID BONIOR: Okay.

DR. HOFFMAN: -- don't have to crane your neck. Basically about 70 percent of Republicans and Democrats distrust people who voted for someone from the other party in 2016. And, I'm curious as to how you guys, who worked together in Congress and who were able to see across the aisle, make sense of where we are right now, where Republicans and Democrats simply don't seem to see eye to eye, don't seem to understand each other.

MIKE CASTLE: I'll be happy to start on that. I, you know, I really am concerned about where we're going in this, in this country -- I sort of mentioned it in my little opening talk -- and, and that is that there is, there is just a tremendous divide out there and, and frankly it affects all of us to a great degree. As you, as you may recall, I was taken out of politics in a primary upset in the Republican Party in 2010 perhaps surprisingly but perhaps stupidly because we didn't pay enough attention to it. But, you know, the, the bottom line is that the, the Tea Party people came in and they brought in about \$500,000 and they plowed it into, into media and, and whatever and that was the, the beginning of the end or was the end, and, you know, that, that was a, a, a problem and it's because certain people didn't like my voting record or, or whatever it may be.

Probably didn't like me working with David if I had to guess. They may not have known that. But the, but the bottom line is that, you know, that, that's just a, a huge problem that we're facing in, in America today. And I think that divide is, is great. I had some problems in this election to be candid, the last election, for President. I supported John Kasich in the Republican Primary. I thought he would be a, a good president. I had worked with John on some of his budget issues, budget reconciliation, reconciliation issues which for the first time in many decades, I suppose; we actually balanced the budget of, of the United States. I don't mean to make myself an important player in that. I wasn't. But I worked with him somewhat and I respected him for, for what he had done and I think he had the ability to really understand what needs to be done at the presidential level. Then you got into the issue of Hillary Clinton and, and Donald Trump and I did not know Donald Trump and I'm not, you know, casting aspersions at him. At, at this point I have a few things for which I disagree but, but the bottom line is I was not a great supporter of, of Hillary Clinton either. And I had known her somewhat because Bill Clinton and I were governors together so I got to know her through that so I was not very supportive of her. So I ended up voting for Donald Trump. You know, nobody's gotten up to leave quite yet but that may, but, you know, and am I sorry I did it? Yeah, I mean, there's some problems there I don't like. And I'd like to see it changed around. I, I was hoping that, I didn't like the way he ran the campaign. It worked for him so I give him credit for that. But I was convinced that, you know, this is not a, a stupid man and, and when he gets elected he'll, you know, get rid of his tweeting and, and you know get rid of his attacking everybody who comes after him, or whatever it may be, and, and actually end up being a, a good president of the United States. So, it

hasn't gotten there yet. I pray to God that it does. This country needs all the help it can get and I just hope that he's learning lessons along the way, starting to listen to people and maybe he'll be a better President than he has proven to be so far. But, you know, there, there are divides out there and there are divides within parties and it, it's not going to go away easily. I mean, the best thing that could happen is that the parties sit down and, and work out something together and get credit for it. I don't know what's going to happen to tax reform. I don't, I'm not even sure I understand exactly what's in the tax reform legislation they're, they're talking about at, at this point. I understand it generally. But, you know, it'd be wonderful if something the Republicans and Democrats to do together. I'm not sure they will but it would be nice. I mean, they, they need, I think, bipartisan victories in, in Congress so they get the idea of, of maybe together we can help the people more.

DAVID BONIOR: This graph behind me, as I should say, is, is very disturbing and it's, it's actually a little scary. And, I think one of the problems we have that has led to this is the breakdown of those basic fundamental structures that I talked about earlier and some a one, some other ones in addition to that -- voter suppression is a good example. But, so, what, what to do about all of this? I mean, it's historically if you look at the Congress's; I mean this isn't the first time we've been in this situation. We haven't been in it as badly as we are now I think but during the Civil War and after the Civil War -- I don't know if anybody saw the movie "Lincoln", I mean they had scenes in "Lincoln" about how the Congress was behaving and it was pretty despicable; it's even worse than it is now. And then I remember in the '60s and, you know, we, in '68 those years were terribly divisive years in this country with the war and the civil rights movement and

everything. This is really scary because the, the person at the top has not a lot of respect for anybody else but himself and I, it pains me to say that -- I don't want to say that --- but that's the conclusion that I've, I've come to. The way he belittles people. I mean, we've never, Democrats never poured that out about John McCain, or, or, or Romney when he ran for President more recently but the fact of the matter is he's not acting like a President. He's alienating too many people not only in our country but in the world community and it's scary. So, you know, we got, he's going to be the President though for the next three years and maybe more if he gets reelected and the question is, you know, how do we start to piece things together and I think we, we have to start at the really the basics. I mean, we're all human beings. We have more in common than we, than we don't have in common. We, we get up in the morning, we have families, we go to work. You know, we want to have good schools. We want to have safe neighborhoods. We want to have safe highways. We want to have all of that and whether you're a Democrat or a Republican you want to have a decent infrastructure. There are things that you can build on and we've got to find ways -- and that's why I picked out those three subjects that I talked about tonight because those are areas for, for the most part that have broad support among Democrats and Republicans. So how do we build on that and then once we get to that point, you know, have reasoned discussion, and discourse on some of the big issues like tax reform, like healthcare. Those are tougher issues because of points of view but if you can do them in, in a reasoned way you can actually get something done, some things done. I worked with Speaker Hastert. I talked about this in the class so forgive me for repeating it for those who have heard it. But, we actually got some things done. I, he didn't have a good relationship with

Dick Gephardt and Gephardt didn't have one with him so I ended up working quite a bit with Hastert to get things moved in the House. And we worked on clean water issues together that we actually got to the President that he signed. We worked on tax issues. He wanted the marriage penalty eradicated and I wanted the, and my colleagues that I worked with wanted, the child tax credit extended. You can find things that you can work with that are, you know, have equal weight that you can trade off on and get things done and put in a package. But it takes people that are willing to talk to each other to start with and then it takes people that are willing to know when to cut the deal and at what time to cut the deal. And I'm afraid we don't have that right now and because of the President has obviously have to sign it and he, he keeps interfering in getting things done. I mean, Corker and Jeff Flake and John McCain, these are pretty honorable people and have served the country very well I think and they ought not to have been belittled the way the President has belittled them and it seems to me if he's going to do that to his own party he's going to lose the respect of not only his party members but he's going to lose the respect of the Democrats who are searching for answers as well.

DR. HOFFMAN: Is it remarkable to you how Congressmen or Congress people are reacting to President Trump and what would you do if you were in that position now as both a Democrat and a Republican?

DAVID BONIOR: If we were in the Congress?

DR. HOFFMAN: Yeah.

DAVID BONIOR: Well, I would vote on issues that if we agreed on an issue with, with the President I would, I would be supportive dependent upon what it was. So I can give you a good example. When they get to infrastructure I think

we probably would have some agreement on, on that. I'm not positive because there are different infrastructure plans floating around but I think we can get to some agreement on that. For my personal viewpoint, if they renegotiate NAFTA I think that's a good thing. I mean, there, there are a couple of things that I can look at and say that maybe we; we've got something that we can work with here. Schumer was able to do that with, and, and Speaker Pelosi with, excuse me Leader Pelosi, with President Trump on extending the, the budget. So, I mean, there are things you can work with but you've got to do it in an arena of respect. You can't be, as Mike pointed out, you can't be tweeting every day that this guy's an idiot or this guy is too short or this guy is, is, is a moron. And you can't be doing that and, and expecting people to respect you and get things, and, and actually move, move things forward. The world doesn't work that way.

MIKE CASTLE: I mean, I think we have to move things forward as, as, as well and one of them that David touched on is this whole business of infrastructure. There, there's probably no body in this room, there's probably almost nobody in the country who doesn't believe that we need to do more with our infrastructure. I was riding the train to Washington, D.C. yesterday -- I, I'm with a law firm now in an office in Washington and an office in Wilmington -- and I saw this article about the, they have to replace all these ties on, on the railroad tracks and I'm thinking my God I'm on the railroad tracks right now. But apparently they've been instead of using creosote or whatever they should use they were using some sort of coloring agent and saving money and, you know, as a result the, the, the doggone ties aren't supporting the rails correctly and, you know, there are problems. And I read later in the story it's mostly in the South. I said I'm not going to go south of Washington, D.C. ever again. But, you know,

that's, that's something that people agree on. I mean, we see it with bridges, we see it with highways. It's just there. We all know that there's all kinds of money overseas; hopefully if they do this tax reform they can do it in the context of an infrastructure package as well by offering enough to these corporations to bring that money back in so that they can actually get that done. I mean, that's something they can actually, there is --

DAVID BONIOR: Um-hum.

MIKE CASTLE: -- actually a way of financing that and, and a way of getting it done and helping this country in an area of need at, at this point. So that is absolutely something I hope they're working on. I don't know if they are. I haven't read a lot about that in terms of this tax reform business but I, but I hope that they are looking at it. I would also say one other thing. We, we talked about the, the, the coin program which, a 50 state quarter program which I was able to be the sponsor of and that has produced about five, five and a half billion dollars of seigniorage which is money that can be spent. It's money that could theoretically still be owed but if all of you are collecting the quarters and you don't turn them back in it, it won't actually have to be paid out so it's, it's called seigniorage and it, it's money that's used to run Treasury and the Mint and various things like that instead of the taxpayers money. But to me there are all kinds of things. You, you, you have the, the National Institutes of Health; are, are we getting the, the right amount of money for when they, these big, big drug companies or whatever take advantage of, of the, the various inventions by the National Institutes, Institutes of Health? What are we doing with respect to a lot of the, the military things? The, the military has been very involved in, in making drones better and, and various other things that actually are, are picked up by a

lot of our private companies. Could some of these things be sold to them as a way of producing revenue for the United States? And, and Lord only knows we need to pay a lot of attention to, to education. I just don't think we can continue to increase the cost of education. We need to absolutely educate the, the lower and middle class people of the United States of America. We just cannot continue not to educate because of financial reasons. And, and the bottom line is that we need to, I think, put a lot of pressure on them to, to look carefully at what they're doing and not reduce your salary, Lindsay, I mean and it isn't anything like that. But I mean --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

DAVID BONIOR: -- to make absolutely sure that, you know, we're being as sufficient as possible with respect to, to reducing the cost of particularly higher education which needs a lot of help today.

DR. HOFFMAN: Well you brought up -- and I'll, I'll toss the questions to the audience in just a moment. So I have two students, Katie and Sirandou, if you can go back to the booth and get ready for our catch box which is our little box we can throw around and have people ask questions from the audience. But actually Katie who's walking to the back room right now, you mentioned the 2010 primary and I think that this is something worth talking about --

DAVID BONIOR: I [indiscernible] if that's all right.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

DR. HOFFMAN: I think in reflection on Trump, was the Tea Party movement of 2010 a premonition of the supporters who are for Trump, or is it something different?

MIKE CASTLE: Well, in 2010 the Tea Party had started to really assert itself.

And I had met, I didn't know her well, but Lisa Murkowski who's a, was and is the senator, one of the senators from Alaska, and she called me about two weeks before the primary election and said, Mike, she said you better watch these Tea Party people carefully. You may recall they had defeated her --

DR. HOFFMAN: Um-hum.

MIKE CASTLE: -- in a primary in Alaska and she won on a write-in vote later on. And I said, Lisa, don't worry about it, we have it under control.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

MIKE CASTLE: I mean, that was not a very prophetic statement and I, and, and, and again, I don't think I paid attention to it as I should. But the, but the Tea Party at, at that point it was something called the Tea Party Express that came in and spent a lot of money in order to come after me and, you know, we were sort of not cognizant of what was happening and all of a sudden TV ads started popping up in the last couple of weeks there and, and, you know, I, I lost the, the primary. And I blame myself; I don't blame anybody in my campaign. I, I should have been more cognizant of it myself. But, but they were organized then. And I mean, that's long before, you know, Trump got involved in, in, in running for anything. So I would tell you that the, the Tea Party which -- and, and the Tea Party people are, are basically very conservative and, and, and very believing that you absolutely have to vote the straight Republican line in, in, in virtually all of these issues that you could, you could conjure up, or, you know, you're, you're not one of them. You should not be a part of the Republican Party. Well the Tea Party has spread its influence into a number of parties and other races since that time and both with threatening, threatening primaries and actually primary and occasionally winning a, a primary one way or another. I, I think it's destructive. I

mean, I had a pretty substantial lead in that general election and they basically said we're, you know, we'll give up a Republican seat for our purpose which is what happened and it's happened in other elections too. And I think that's, that's a, a substantial problem. But the answer is they, they've been around now for a, a few years.

DR. HOFFMAN: Do you think they're the same as the Trump voters though?

MIKE CASTLE: Yeah, I think they, I'm sorry, I think they are the same as the Trump voters to a degree. I mean, as I said, I voted for Trump. There are probably people here who voted for, for Trump. I hope somebody did. Maybe not. But in any event, I, I, I think that they, they basically, I don't think any of those people were going to vote for Hillary Clinton under any circumstance. Whether they voted for Trump in a primary or not or whether they're registered as Republicans or not I don't know the answer to that. But I guarantee if it got down to Trump and, and Hillary they were going to vote for, for Trump. Whether they regretted it or not I don't know. But I'm sure they did.

DR. HOFFMAN: Well, thank you so much. I think we're ready for questions from the audience if Katie and Sirandou, my trusty catch box experts. Do we have any questions from the audience? Just raise your hand. There we go, Katie, we've got one right there.

Q: Hi Mike. It's Margo.

MIKE CASTLE: Hi Margo.

Q: I'd love to know if you think there can be anything since you and I worked on the gun issue back in the day that we can do to try to help our nation with what's been happening and any control whatsoever?

MIKE CASTLE: Well, I mean, that's one of the positions that the Tea Party

people didn't like necessarily. I, I believe that we do need to do something about this threat of guns in, in the United States of America. The thing I'd start with right now is to defeat or prevent from bringing up this bill on silencers which I think is a huge mistake. I mean, the last thing you need to do is, is to sell silencers and, and allow criminals to run around and, and hide the fact that, you know, they've actually shot somebody or whatever it may be. We now have systems in Wilmington, Delaware that tell the police where a gun has been used. If you get silencers that wouldn't work anymore. They could do it by sound I guess. So I, I think that needs to happen. I think, I've always been for the ban of, of, of assault weapons. I, I think that's a bit of a problem. I am also for a ban of these what the Las Vegas shooter did. What are, what are --

DAVID BONIOR: Stocks.

MIKE CASTLE: Stock.

DAVID BONIOR: Stock.

MIKE CASTLE: Stock what, something --

DAVID BONIOR: Something stocks.

MIKE CASTLE: -- something or other. But that converts it to automatic if, if you will. I mean, that, those things are just huge problems that I, you know, I, I just, you know, don't believe that they need to be even thought about. I mean, I, I just think those things need to be banned because of what, how guns have been used etcetera. There are other things I would do. Some of these high powerful rifles and guns, they don't kill deer; they blow the deer apart for God sake. I mean, you know, some of those things are, are dubious as well. To think that, that criminals out there are better armed than the, the, the police. It, it really bothers me and I, I think we need to pay attention to that. So I think there's

things that we can do. I mean, I don't have problems with, you know, the right to own a gun or whatever it may be but within limits of what you own and what you could do with it I do have some serious problems.

DR. HOFFMAN: So, I'll follow up on that just because the Republican Party has had a relationship with the NRA, the National Rifle Association for a long time, how is your interaction with that organization? Do you, as a more moderate Republican has that been a difficult road to go down?

MIKE CASTLE: I, I don't know this for a fact, but I imagine I have the lowest mark of any Republican maybe in the history of the NRA for all I know. And not only that but the president of the NRA, not the fellow you hear who speaks all the time but the, the actually elected president lived in Dover, Delaware. So I had to deal with that a little bit too. But, you know, I, and essentially I, you know, there are people who have even stronger beliefs against guns than, than I do but I think there are certain things that could be done. Again, I think it's something everyone needs to talk about and sit down and get done.

DAVID BONIOR: When I was the Whip in 1990 -- oh, '93, '93, we had a crime bill in which we had an assault weapon ban --

DR. HOFFMAN: Um-hum.

DAVID BONIOR: -- and we had a 30-day waiting period and we passed it. And, so, but that was a long time ago and they, the NRA made an example of some of the people who voted for that but I'm hopeful that we'll get back to the point where, where we can have some reasonable discussion and get something, some things done. This carnage cannot continue. It's, it's obscene and it's wrong and the American people, I think a lot, a lot of them want a change. I know people are afraid that it's the tent under the, the, the camel's

nose under the tent and when we do that you're going to get something else. But, you know, Michael just talked about some of these weapons that, we don't need them at all. I mean, they're, they're not used for hunting in any responsible way and we need, we need some regulation. And there are groups that are forming and there are people with deep pockets who are helping them now on the other side so hopefully we'll get some balance. I know when I ran for Congress the NRA spent tons of money to get me every year and I used to always tell them after the election you wasted your money again. But -- which would just tick them off and they'd come after me another time. But, I'm with Michael on this and with this woman who has asked this question.

DR. HOFFMAN: Well, so --

MIKE CASTLE: Well, I, I, I will tell you this too that I, I not only supported the bill, I voted for that bill but I was in the Republican Caucus Room and, you know, it was an opportunity to get up and say something. So I got up and explained why I was in support of this, this bill including the assault weapon ban and a name people here may recognize. Jim Bunning was a pitcher for the Phillies and Jim Bunning was a tough guy and if you got in his way he would throw at your head or whatever it may be. But in any event, he came at me. I mean, he came literally out of his chair and I thought he was going to hit me at some point because he was so irate about the fact that I was supporting what he considered to be communist legislation.

DR. HOFFMAN: When George W. Bush and his administration and the Congress at that time didn't renew that assault weapons ban do you feel like there's any, can you come back from that? Do you think you can, do you think that the, that a new legislation could be enacted that would reinforce that or, or

are we sort of past that point?

DAVID BONIOR: Well, I hate to keep going back to the same argument that I made when we started this evening, but unless you change some of the underlying foundations and structures you're not going to elect people who will have a more balanced view on that.

DR. HOFFMAN: So, I think both of you would argue that we need to elect more moderate Democrats and Republicans into Congress?

DAVID BONIOR: Well, we need more moderates and I'm a progressive so I'm not a moderate. I don't label myself as a moderate. But, I recognize the value of a moderate because they can, they, they can be a bridge to getting things done.

MIKE CASTLE: And not just a moderate but, you know, there, there are a lot of conservatives who are very thoughtful who on certain issues will, will vote the right way. I mean, that happened on stem cells. I mean, a lot of them ended up -

DAVID BONIOR: Um-hum.

MIKE CASTLE: -- voting for it even though they started in opposition. So there's those who will listen --

DAVID BONIOR: Um-hum.

MIKE CASTLE: -- and, and, and vote what I believe is the right way but will vote for what hopefully will, will help people in, in this country. And, unfortunately the, you know, it's to the point now where both the political parties are holding people, you've got to vote the progressive ticket or you, you've got to vote for, you know, the, the ultraconservative ticket and as a result nothing gets done sort of in the middle. But it doesn't mean that everyone's going to be a moderate but it does mean that they'll at least be thoughtful and, and vote the right way from

time to time.

DR. HOFFMAN: All right. Let's take another question from the audience.

Katie, I wonder if you can toss it over here, or walk it over here?

MS. KATIE: [Indiscernible.]

DR. HOFFMAN: Thank you.

Q: So, you're talking about changes at the foundational level.

What about a move away from a two party system and would that force more compromise and more discussion and is that even possible?

DR. HOFFMAN: There you go.

MIKE CASTLE: I don't think that's, I mean -- you want me to go first, David? I, I, I think that's not going to happen. I mean, the whole concept -- you have to understand that political parties are driven by money to a great degree. They're, they're driven by registration or, or whatever. You know, Ross Perot made a sort of run at it but the bottom line is I don't see that happening in the United States of, of America. I mean, I, the Republican Party's got some problems. I don't think ultimately it will split. I think ultimately it will pull together more. The Democrats have a few problems of their own. But, you know, they're, they're not as deep in, you know, or, or perhaps they're manageable. But I think it's very unlikely you're ever going to have a, a really working third party. I mean, you know, I think you may have, you know, interim third parties every now and then because you get a, you know, a, a candidate like a, a Ross Perot who has money and or you get a candidate who has money and some charm or whatever and, and perhaps somebody like that could get elected. I don't think get elected president but could get elected to the House or, or the Senate or whatever. But I, I don't think third parties are the solution to any of the political problems that exist

in America today.

DM: It's --

DR. HOFFMAN: David?

DAVID BONIOR: -- it's hard for a third party to, to really gain attraction in this country because its, we don't have a parliamentary system and the way our, the way our laws are, are structured in the United States, our election laws, and it, it's very difficult for them to get the necessary people to get elected to the Congress. I mean, I think we, you know, Bernie Sanders was able to do it in Vermont. Occasionally you'll get someone that's able to pull it off as an independent. At the presidential level I, they just have been nothing but a pain in the neck as far as I'm concerned. We lost two presidential elections because of the Green Party. Ralph Nader's candidacy as well as Jill Stein's candidacy cost us two elections.

MIKE CASTLE: And this is good.

DAVID BONIOR: The presidency.

MIKE CASTLE: Oh, I'm sorry.

DAVID BONIOR: Yeah, this is good.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

DAVID BONIOR: So, you know, sometimes I like most, like most people that yearn for another voice, you know? And sometimes you want another voice out there but from a practical standpoint I don't think it's been helpful so far and I just don't see the traction where it can make a difference.

DR. HOFFMAN: So it hasn't been helpful so far. Do you anticipate it ever being a possibility for a third party?

DAVID BONIOR: It's always a possibility. What's his name, Eugene Debs got

a million votes. Ross Perot got 19 percent one year as an Independent. And, the next year I think it was a little lower but so those are significant vote totals.

MIKE CASTLE: But I don't think it'll be a political party. I, I think if it, something like that happens it's going to happen around one person.

DAVID BONIOR: Yeah.

MIKE CASTLE: I --

DR. HOFFMAN: A movement.

MIKE CASTLE: And you know, a, a quick movement of, you know, electing somebody to President or something else.

DAVID BONIOR: Um-hum.

MIKE CASTLE: I don't think you're, you know, there, there may be somebody out there who's really charismatic who, who could pull that off but I don't --

DR. HOFFMAN: Would you argue that --

MIKE CASTLE: -- think it's going to be a party.

DR. HOFFMAN: -- Trump is that movement or is he a Republican in nature?

MIKE CASTLE: I don't know.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

MIKE CASTLE: I really don't know. I mean, I, I don't mean to be, you know, the gentleman's the President and I don't mean to be overly critical or, or harsh with respect to that but as I said I have some problems with certain things he's done or, and, and the way he carries on. But, you know, he, he was elected as a Republican. He ran as a Republican. And he ran in a primary as, as a Republican so I guess you have to classify him as a Republican. Where he is on certain issues is, is, is, it beats me but you know that's --

DAVID BONIOR: Well, he has a, a great deal of appeal. There's no question about that. There's no, I mean, that's, that's, that's reality. I was looking at was, at the polling numbers yesterday or this morning, I can't remember, on his approval rating and a number of polls have him in the 43, 42 percent. Well, Obama, that's where Obama spent his time in, in the 42-43 percent area for most of his presidency until the end where he shot up. But, so, you know, he's popular with people. My congressional district back in Michigan voted twice for Obama. I, it's a swing district. I mean, I had to run for my life for 26 years there, believe me. I had a lot of close races and I made it each time. But, it could go either way. And they voted for Obama twice and then they turned around and voted overwhelmingly for Trump. Now we lost Michigan, the Democrats, Hillary, and the Democrats lost Michigan to Trump by 11,000 votes. My district swung 40,000 votes.

DR. HOFFMAN: Wow.

DAVID BONIOR: And I think what some of that it was all about in the Midwest - Wisconsin, Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Iowa -- was the fact that he was talking to people that quite frankly other people in our party and others weren't talking to. It was that heartland of America that people were just often disrespected like the flyover -- I hate that term --

DR. HOFFMAN: Um-hum.

DAVID BONIOR: -- flyover country. I just can't stand it. Anyway, and people there were hurting pretty bad in terms of we, we lost our manufacturing base and we were hoping that the Democrats at the top would face that and do something about it. I didn't happen. And, they said okay, you're not going to pay attention to us we're not going to pay attention to you. And, they voted for him because he

was, you know, he was the anti.

DR. HOFFMAN: Um-hum.

DAVID BONIOR: So, we'll see if they hold because he's not delivering right now on what he promised in terms of jobs, in terms of trade, healthcare. He's not, they haven't gotten anything done. It's only been a year, I recognize that, but, but usually, that's usually you're best, you're best year, your first year, right? Historically most new presidents have their best accomplishments, at least legislatively, in their first year.

DR. HOFFMAN: True, that's true. All right, we have time for a few more audience questions. Sirandou, we've got a couple over here. See how far you can toss it.

MS. SIRANDOU: [Indiscernible.]

DR. HOFFMAN: Do you want to try it?

MIKE CASTLE: One right there too.

DAVID BONIOR: Whoa. Good job.

DR. HOFFMAN: Very close.

DAVID BONIOR: Yeah.

Q: George Stephanopoulos interviewed Jeff Flake and asked him, um, by not running for reelection was he abdicating his role as the moderate voice in the Senate, a person who would stand and speak his conscience and stand up to the President. Well, I think there's 20 Congressmen that have refused, that are not going to try to be reelected. We have Corker and we also have Flake and a few others. Are these voices, have they in fact abdicated the keys to stand up to the policies and the rhetoric that we're finding and hearing now because when they leave in 14 months there will be no voices from them.

There will be the voices that might get elected; the Christine O'Donnell's that, those type of voices. Have they abdicated and do you feel they should stay and, and represent the decency of each party and be the voice of reason? I would like to hear your comments on that.

DR. HOFFMAN: That's a good question.

DAVID BONIOR: Well --

DR. HOFFMAN: Should, should people stay in an administration that they maybe don't necessarily disagree with, agree with or is it their moral duty to leave?

MIKE CASTLE: I'd like to comment first on Christine O'Donnell. I don't think she's living in Delaware anymore by the way. So --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

MIKE CASTLE: I'm not worried about her right now but she may be.

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

MIKE CASTLE: I just don't know that. I haven't seen her --

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

MIKE CASTLE: -- since that election. I mean, some are staying. I mean, John, John McCain -- who's not a well man by the way, he's got some serious health issues -- is, is staying. He's going after Lindsey Graham who is staying. And they, they leave for reasons beyond just dealing with, with Trump. For example, Jeff Flake, you know, apparently had a, maybe a serious primary and maybe a serious general election he would have been facing so, you know, that was, that entered into it I'm sure. And, and I know a couple of people in, in the House are leaving. I mean, like Jeb Hensarling just announced he's leaving. He is the head of the financial services committee which, which I was on, and, you

know, he's, he has served his six years. The Republicans as part of the contract with, with America basically limited the number of years you could be a chairman. And so, he's decided that rather than going back to being just a regular Congressman he would move on. You know, so some of these people are leaving for reasons that are quite different than, you know, than just Trump one way or another. My, my judgment is if, if people feel as, as I do and some others do that, that, that Donald Trump needs to be stood up to from time to time they should stay. I will tell you, they'll will be a lot more effective in Congress than out of Congress. I know all about that.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

MIKE CASTLE: And, they, they should not, you know, drop out that, that easily. So, I hope, I mean, people do drop out in, in, in any midterm election or any election. You're going to have, you know, a third of the senators running and 100 percent of the House running and you're going to have some who just drop out. They may be have gotten older, they may, you know, don't like the looks of their district or where they are anymore. Perhaps they don't like Trump or, or, or whatever. But, I agree with your basic premise and that is if you disagree with him don't run from it. You know, stay there and, and, and try to fight it. But if you have other reasons for, for getting out, I mean, they're going to make their own decisions and, and I would guarantee you that if you interviewed those numbers of people who are getting out you would probably find that there are a lot of reasons for, for their leaving if I had to guess.

DR. HOFFMAN: David?

DAVID BONIOR: No, I'll pass on that ma'am.

DR. HOFFMAN: Okay.

AUDIENCE: [Laughter.]

DR. HOFFMAN: All right, another question from the audience.

MIKE CASTLE: There was somebody here, right here.

DR. HOFFMAN: Yes, Sirandou, I think you can do the short toss there.

Great.

Q: Thank God I am closer. Yes.

DR. HOFFMAN: Thank you.

Q: I just said, first of all, I'd like to congratulate you to, from two different party. You having this town hall meeting which is one of the solutions to get the two party together. That's a good start and we should all clap for that.

DR. HOFFMAN: [Laughter.]

AUDIENCE: [Applause.]

Q: And, thank you, and then my question probably it's a little bit different than everybody else because it directly hurt me and people like me and my name is Mustafa Lacoym [sp.] I'm a [indiscernible] American. And, my question and my expression about what's going on today or, or, you know, in this country and the race, the racism and the insult and the bringing down certain people. And, my son, who grew up all raised in this country 27 years old and I always mention to him -- he had never been in my country, always been here -- he always ask me, Dad, do you appreciate the democracy and you can speak out and you can express yourself here. I said, yes. And that's one of the most reasons I am in this country. And, in, in that case I were able, I wanted to raise my son in a way that -- I'm not talking about patriotic; it doesn't have to be patriotic or not patriotic, but be a good person in this country. And successful, and educated and then of course I'm reaching to that point. But however, it

worries me and it's very sad, many people like me that when something like Las Vegas happens that person who was born and raised in this country and Christian they call him different titles and they don't even brag about him anymore. But as soon as a person who they call a Muslim -- I don't personally know who that person is, who did it yesterday.

DR. HOFFMAN: I think this is a really good point. Can you, can you sum it up in a question real quickly?

Q: Yes. My question is, does this have -- of course you are the closest people I can talk to, I wish people who are in Washington they were here tonight and answer my question -- that since you were in that position before does that concern you that, does it give you political advantage by saying this one terrorist and the other one is not terrorist.

DR. HOFFMAN: [Indiscernible.] for example.

Q: What difference does it make?

DR. HOFFMAN: A lone wolf.

Q: A lone wolf. What difference does it make the innocent victims die which I'm sad about that and you're using that for your political benefit, this person is terrorist, that person is not terrorist. To me they're all --

DR. HOFFMAN: Thank you [indiscernible.]

Q: -- terrorists. So --

DR. HOFFMAN: Thank you so much.

Q: -- what would you do?

DR. HOFFMAN: Thank you, sir. That's a great question. I think this is all about framing. We come back to this idea of, of guns and gun control and how you label people like the person who committed last, yesterday in New York City

versus a, the person who committed that horrible tragedy in Las Vegas not long ago. How do you --

DAVID BONIOR: Well, they both were performing terrorist acts. So, you're right. But, I'm going to take this in a more broader direction rather than just on, on the violence pieces that have been happening in this country and abroad. It, it's just the, it's just the way primarily the President but not totally, he labels people based on race, based on their sex, based on their physical disabilities. It's pretty outrageous and we need people to stand up and say that. Now, I'm, you know, I'm sad that Flake is leaving because he's, you know, he's been willing to do that. And I, and I suspect he will continue to do it after he leaves. But, you know, you have a bigger voice once you're there. And so, you know, we need people to stand up because if we don't, you know, you know the old Reinhold knee bar line, you don't stand up and say anything it's going to be your group next. And, I, I feel very strongly about that.

MIKE CASTLE: Well, I, my, my belief is that first of all immigration is the, the strength of, of America. America was built on immigration [indiscernible]. We're all here in this room, you know, children of immigrants. It's maybe many, many generations ago but nonetheless we are. I, I believe, you know, and there may be certain problems in certain countries that, that do call for the prohibitions that, that Trump has asked for. I, I, I, I'm not well versed enough to know who that might be. But I, I believe that in general that we need to have a much better scrutiny of, of people who are coming into America. That we know everything about them; we know their backgrounds; we know what problems they may have had; we know, you know, what their, their status in, in life was before; do they have a previous record of any kind? You know, we just need to do a much better

job than we have been doing to keep people out who just simply should not be in, in America. I also worry about the lone wolf aspect of it. Like the, the crazy son of a gun in, in Las Vegas, you know, who, I guess, nobody would really have a reason to suspect and the terrible act that he performed. But I mean, but the bottom line is that, you know, I, I don't think we can cut off immigration all together and, you know, we need to be careful about saying whole countries are on the ban list and we need to make absolutely sure that the people coming to America that we know as much about them as possible. And, I'm afraid that's not been done particularly well heretofore. We may have to pour more money and people into it to do it but my sense is that that is of vital significance to try to protect all of us in, in America today. I mean, I, I, I'm worried about all of this. You know, you have the business in Las Vegas, you have the guy in New York driving down a path that I'm pretty sure my, my wife walked on when she took a walk around Manhattan with her, with her friends and that kind of thing. And, and that, that really makes me, you know, very anxious, those things that are happening. And I think the media needs to, to, to, you know, pay a lot of attention. We haven't talked about the media much tonight but I, I'm, I'm not a, a great fan of, you know, the, the social media and I'm not a great fan of some of the actual broadcast media that, that, that's going on at this point. And I'm not saying they're inciting riots or anything of that nature but, you know, perhaps they need to be more discreet in terms of how they, they cover some of those things.

DAVID BONIOR: Um-hum.

DR. HOFFMAN: Well, I think that's a great conversation for another time. I do want to, before we thank our guests for being here, I do want to let you know that we have our final event from National Agenda in, in two weeks on, on November

15th at 7:30 here in Mitchell Hall. I always like to bring a little comedy into our discussions because I think it's interesting to think about how do we laugh about differences and where do we cross the lines? Where is it okay to sort of laugh about where we're at? And then I wanted to finally let you know, again, particularly the students in the audience, about the Voices of the Divide Audio Essay Contest that I mentioned in the introduction. The deadline is December 1st. That's about a month from now. And, there are cash prizes and I think this is a great opportunity for students to express their views on where they are at in 2017. And, let's give a big round of applause for our bipartisan panel tonight.

DAVID BONIOR: Thank you.

MIKE CASTLE: Thank you.